



# A REVIEW OF DATA ON HISPANIC AMERICANS



**“The Borinqueneers”**  
**65th Infantry Regiment**  
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## **PREFACE**

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## **SCOPE**

The Topical Research Intern Program provides the opportunity for servicemembers and DoD civilian employees to work on diversity/equal opportunity projects while on a 30-day tour of duty at the Institute. During their tour, the interns use a variety of primary and secondary source materials to compile a review of data or research pertaining to an issue of importance to equal opportunity (EO) and equal employment opportunity (EEO) specialists, supervisors, and other leaders throughout the Services. The resulting publications (such as this one) are intended as resources and educational materials and do not represent official policy statements or endorsements of the DoD or any of its agencies. The publications are distributed to EO/EEO personnel and selected senior officials to aid them in their duties.

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## REVIEW OF DATA ON HISPANIC AMERICANS

### INTRODUCTION

Since the “official” inception of the term “Hispanic” in 1973, its use has led to controversy. Originally applied by the Office of Education (an agency within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare [HEW]) for the purpose of developing racial and ethnic categories which it could use for data-gathering purposes, the term “Hispanic” encompassed Mexican, Puerto Rican, Central American, South American, Caribbean, and Spanish peoples who share some common cultural values. Since Hispanics can be of any race, to help keep their data separate, HEW further clarified the “White” and “Black” categories with the definition, “not of Hispanic origin.” Other Federal Agencies such as the Office of Management and Budget and the Bureau of the Census soon followed suit in using the term. (5:64; 11:2)

Earlier attempts at classifying this group were even more nebulous. In 1960, the Bureau of the Census identified the Hispanic American population as "white persons of Spanish surname." In this day and age, such a reference seems ludicrous. How then should we define the Hispanic population? Should Hispanics be lumped into one group such as "those who speak Spanish," "those with Spanish surnames," or "those who come from Spain or Latin America"? The reader is reminded that Hispanics may be of any race and have a multicultural ethnic identity. Also, not all Hispanics speak Spanish. (21:115)

It was not until the 1970 census that the concept of reporting on Hispanics as a distinct group existed and then only in a 5 percent sample of the census questionnaires distributed. The 1980 Census was the first to use the "Spanish origin or descent" question on 100 percent of the questionnaires. The 1990 census attempted to provide Hispanics in the United States with a more detailed identity. In the 1990 census, those surveyed were asked to classify themselves as Hispanic if they fit into one of the following categories: Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or Other Spanish/Hispanic origin. The category was broken down further by providing a write-in line for subgroups. The Bureau of the Census conducts monthly Current Population Surveys where persons are asked to classify themselves as Hispanic if they are of “Mexican-American, Chicano, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American (Spanish countries), or other Hispanic origin.”(17:5)

Despite these additional questions, Hispanic interest groups felt cheated. The Texas Civil Rights Project and the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund were two of the first civil rights groups to bring a law suit against the state of Texas demanding an increase in the head count of Hispanics. The purpose of such a lawsuit was to ensure that Hispanics would not be shorted politically since census numbers are used to redraw political boundaries. (15:A-1)

The term “Hispanic” is still not accepted by all those to whom it refers. Other terms, such as “Latino,” or “Chicano,” have been suggested. Latino implies a background stemming from Latin America, or the world of Latin (Roman) influence in Europe. In this sense, “Latino” might include Guayanese, Brazilians, French, Romanians, or others whose culture is decidedly not of

Spanish origin. Whites frequently apply the term “Chicano” to all Hispanics, ignorant of the fact that “Chicano” refers only to persons of Mexican background. A poll conducted by the *Los Angeles Times* found that nearly equal numbers of Hispanic respondents preferred the labels “Hispanic” and “Latino.” (11:20-23)

The U.S. Hispanic population has grown tremendously in the past decade and demographers predict this trend will continue well into the next century. Whereas 1980 Census figures showed almost 15 million Hispanics living in the United States, this number had increased to 22.3 million in 1990, indicating a 50 percent increase in one decade. In 1995 the Hispanic population had increased to 26.9 million. (17:14)

The Hispanic population is expected to exceed 31 million by the year 2000. Blacks are expected to number 40 million by the year 2010, while Hispanics are expected to top that mark with 41.1 million. Should the census of the year 2000 or 2010 eliminate inaccuracies or under-counting and should the Hispanic population continue to grow at the current rate, Hispanics may very well overtake Blacks as the largest minority group early in the 21st century. (17:14)

This growth may have a profound effect on the Armed Forces. As portrayed in this pamphlet, Hispanics have enjoyed a rich military heritage in the defense of this nation. Although their numbers in the military have doubled in the past 10 years, currently Hispanics make up only 6.8 percent of the Armed Forces. Furthermore, of all Hispanics in uniform, women represent only 6.3 percent. At their current rate of growth, Hispanics will be a rich service resource for recruitment in the future. (3:5, 7)

It is important to have an understanding of the history, contributions, current conditions, and issues for Hispanics in the United States and in the military service. This paper will explore population, language, family structure and marriage, education, economics, famous Hispanic contributors and contributions, and military participation of Hispanics.

## **IMMIGRATION**

- Cubans immigrated to the U.S. in four significant waves. The first wave occurred after Fidel Castro’s takeover, when political unrest prompted nearly 250,000 Cubans to flee to the U.S. Between 1965 and 1973, the second wave came as a result of an agreement between the U.S. and Cuba, allowing Cubans with relatives living in the U.S. to emigrate. Approximately 300,000 Cubans took advantage of this program. The third wave, known as the Mariel Boat Lift, occurred in 1980, when Castro allowed Cuban Americans to visit relatives in Cuba, prompting some 125,000 Cubans to apply for immigration to the U.S. through the Peruvian Embassy. More recently, the continued decline of Cuba’s economy, no longer buoyed by the former Soviet Union, has caused large numbers of Cubans to once again try their luck in boats headed for better prospects in the United States. Of the nearly 860,000 Cubans living in the U.S. in 1990, 63 percent reside in Florida; most in Dade County. (19:386-387)

- Until the 1960s, only a very small number of Dominicans lived in the U.S. The 1980 Census shows that of the approximately 170,000 Dominicans living in the U.S. at that time, only 6

percent had lived in the U.S. before 1960, and nearly a third of that number had immigrated during the 1960s. This was a period of political instability for the Dominican Republic, driving many to find new homes. During the 1980s, despite a calmer political climate, Dominican immigration into the U.S. soared, with nearly a quarter of a million Dominicans admitted. The 1990 Census shows a vast majority of the 506,000 Dominicans living in the U.S. are Dominican-born. This new wave came to America searching for better economic prospects. Over 86 percent of Dominican Americans reside in the Northeast, mainly in New York, New Jersey, and Massachusetts. Florida also has a sizable Dominican community. (19:426-427)

Other Central American immigrants include Guatemalans, Hondurans, and Salvadorans. Central Americans have traditionally been a very small number in the waves of immigrants coming to the United States. In the 1830s, 44 Central Americans immigrated. Between 1890 and 1900, 500 came. The following two decades brought larger numbers; 8,000 between 1900 and 1910, and 17,000 during the 1920s. The immigration quotas imposed in the 1920s slowed the numbers until the 1950s when the quotas were relaxed. Since then, an average of nearly 45,000 Central Americans has immigrated annually into the U.S. Factors in their homelands (i.e. political unrest, declining economic conditions, population explosions, etc.) have caused these people to search for a better life in the United States.

In 1990, there were over 268,000 Guatemalans living in the U.S.; it is estimated that over 100,000 of these live in Los Angeles. Houston, New York City, Washington DC, Chicago, southern Florida, and San Francisco also have significant numbers of Guatemalan Americans.

Hondurans who live in this country are mainly migrant workers, many undocumented. For this reason, the 1990 Census gives no clear representation of their actual numbers. The largest Honduran American communities exist in New York City, Los Angeles, and Miami.

Salvadoran Americans, like Hondurans, have proven difficult to quantify. The Immigration and Naturalization Service estimates that there are between one half and one million Salvadoran immigrants living in the U.S., about two thirds of these legal immigrants--either citizens, permanent aliens (green card holders), or temporary immigrants. The remaining one third are undocumented. (19:599-600, 684; 20:1177)

- Mexicans were living in parts of the U.S. before those parts became U.S. territory, and most remained. By 1900 there were approximately a half million Mexican Americans living in the U.S. Immigration during the first half of the 20th century was sporadic; 31,000 during the first decade, but over 500,000 during the 1920s. Since World War II, Mexican immigration has been high, despite government efforts to regulate it. During the 1960s and 1970s, over 453,000 and 640,000 Mexicans immigrated, respectively. Census figures for 1990 show that there were approximately 12 million Mexican Americans in the U.S., 4.7 percent of the total population and 61 percent of the total Hispanic community. Most Mexican Americans live in the West. The states with the largest Mexican American populations are California, Texas, Illinois, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Florida, and Washington. (20:907-908)

- From 1990 - 1994, approximately 2.3 million Hispanics immigrated to the United States. The larger groups are as follows: Mexico (1.4 million), Dominican Republic (280,000), El Salvador (118,000), Haiti (81,900), Jamaica (74,000), and Cuba (50,500). (17:11)

- The Immigration and Naturalization Service estimated that in 1992 over 2.2 million undocumented immigrants of Hispanic origin entered the country. Of this total, 1.3 million were from Mexico alone. Figures for 1989 estimated that between 1.7 and 2.9 million illegal aliens lived in the United States. This number is growing at a rate of 100,000 to 200,000 per year. As indicated by the 1992 figures, Mexico was the largest supplier of undocumented aliens of any country, mainly due to its long, contiguous border with the United States. Additionally, 96 percent of all apprehended illegal aliens are of Mexican origin. (14:20; 17:12)

## **POPULATION/HEALTH**

- The U.S. Bureau of the Census reported 14.6 million Hispanics in 1980, 22.3 million in 1990, and 26.9 million in 1995. This represents an 85 percent increase in the Hispanic population for this 15-year period as opposed to an overall population increase of 16 percent and a 25 percent increase among Blacks. (17:14)

- The growth rate during the 1980's was the result of a substantial immigration growth from South and Central America (67 percent), Mexico (30 percent), Puerto Rico (14 percent) and Cuba (12 percent), a high fertility rate among Hispanic women, and improved census techniques. (14:2)

- In 1995 the birth rate for Hispanic women was 25.4 births in every 1,000, compared to 14.1 per 1,000 for Whites and 20.3 per 1,000 for Blacks. The Hispanic birthrate is expected to drop to about 22 per 1,000 by the year 2000. (17:20)

- By 1995, 65 percent (17.9 million) of the Hispanic population was of Mexican origin; 9.8 percent (2.7 million) was of Puerto Rican origin; 13.4 percent (3.7 million) was of Central or South American origin; 4 percent (1.1 million) was of Cuban origin; and 6.9 percent (1.9 million) was of "Other Spanish" origin. (17:51)

- The largest numbers of Hispanics are located in California, Texas, New York, Florida, and Illinois. Seventy-five percent of America's Hispanics live in the first four of these states. However, a growing number of Hispanics are relocating to the Midwest due to improved opportunities there. Between 1980 and 1992, 10 Midwestern states (Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Wisconsin, Kansas, Missouri, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Iowa) saw dramatic increases in their Hispanic populations. Minnesota's increase was the largest, at 94 percent. (8:3A)

- In 1990, 24 American cities with populations greater than 100,000 had Hispanic populations of 33 percent or more. The largest percentages include: Laredo, Texas (94 percent), Brownsville, Texas (90 percent), Hialeah, Florida (88 percent), El Monte, California (73 percent), El Paso, Texas (69 percent), Santa Ana, California (65 percent), San Antonio, Texas (56 percent), Oxnard,

California (54 percent), Pomona, California (51 percent), and Salinas, California (51 percent). (17:44-46)

- The Hispanic population is almost evenly divided between the sexes, 50.1 percent male to 49.9 percent female, as opposed to 48.6 percent male to 51.4 percent female for the total population. (14:2)

- Hispanics are more likely to become victims of crime (all crimes) than Whites. In 1994, 63.3 crimes per 1,000 were committed against Hispanics, as opposed to 51.5 per 1,000 for Whites. Hispanics also lost some type of personal property as a result of criminal action more often than either Whites or Blacks. (17:206, 207)

## **FAMILY STRUCTURE AND MARRIAGE**

- In 1990, 4.9 million or 7.4 percent of the 66 million families in the U.S. were Hispanic. (14:834-835)

- Among Hispanic subgroups, Mexicans and Cubans have the highest proportion of married couple families. (17:51)

- In 1995, of the 6.2 million Hispanic families living in the U.S., 42.4 percent owned their own homes, 57.6 percent did not. These percentages correspond almost exactly to those for Black married couple families. (17:48, 51)

- In 1995 female Hispanic householders with no husband present represented 1.5 million or 24 percent of Hispanic households as compared to 13.7 percent for Whites and 45.9 percent for Blacks. (17:48, 51)

- Among Hispanics, the proportion of families headed by women was considerably higher for Puerto Ricans than for other subgroups. (17:51)

- The divorce rate among Hispanics is lower than that of the overall population; however, they are more likely to be married but not living with their spouse. (14:33)

## **LANGUAGE**

- According to 1990 Census figures, 1 of every 14 Americans (17.3 million persons) above the age of 5 spoke Spanish at home. This figure compares to 1 in every 20 in 1980. (14:63; 17:53)

- Of these Spanish-speakers, about 48 percent indicated during the Census that they spoke English "less than very well." This figure compares with 25 percent in 1980. (14:63; 17:53)

## **EDUCATION**

- Only 31 percent of Hispanics ages 3 and 4 are enrolled in preschool programs. Furthermore, 88.3 percent of 16- and 17-year-old Hispanics attend high school compared to a national average of 94.4 percent. These numbers are on the rise. (17:157)
- While 11.6 percent of the overall population does not go beyond the eighth grade, this is true for 34 percent of Hispanics. (16:38-40)
- In 1995, 53.4 percent of Hispanics, ages 25 and over, were high school graduates. This compared with 34 percent for Whites and 36.2 percent for Blacks. During the same period, 9.3 percent of Hispanics had obtained four or more years of college training, compared to 24 percent for Whites and 13.2 percent for Blacks. (17:48, 51)
- There are marked differences in the educational attainment of Hispanic subgroups. While 19.3 percent of Cubans were college graduates, only 6.5 percent of Mexican Americans and 10.7 percent of Puerto Ricans had reached this educational level. (17:51)
- Only 1.7 percent of the full-time instructional faculty in institutions of higher education are of Hispanic origin. (14:79)

## **ECONOMICS**

- In 1995 Hispanics represented 9.2 percent of the U.S. civilian labor force. This was an increase from the 1980 figure of 5.7 percent. During the same year, when the total U.S. unemployment rate was 5.6 percent, the rate for Hispanics was 9.3 percent. (17:51, 393)
- The labor force participation for Hispanic women increased from 47.4 percent in 1980 to 52.6 percent in 1995. (17:393)
- In 1995, although Hispanics comprised approximately 9.2 percent of the total civilian work force, they constituted 28 percent of all private household cleaners and servants; this figure had increased from 11.8 percent in 1983. Hispanics made up 4.3 percent of all physicians, 3.2 percent of all lawyers, 3.3 percent of all engineers, 3.6 percent of all college professors, and 4.8 percent of all managers and administrators. On a positive note, since 1983 the numbers of Hispanics in white-collar positions has increased; in many jobs the number has nearly doubled. (17:405-407)
- In 1995 Hispanics comprised 7.4 percent of all workers who earned an hourly wage less than or equal to the minimum wage of \$4.25 per hour. The median hourly wage for Hispanics was \$7.00 per hour. (17:429)
- The percentage of Hispanic families living in poverty was 28.1 percent in 1990 and 27.8 percent in 1995. The 1995 figure was more than three times the percentage of White families living in poverty (9.1 percent), but about the same as the 27.3 percent figure for Black families. These figures were based on cash incomes only and did not include the value of benefits such as food stamps and other subsidy programs.. (17:48)



- As an individual group, Puerto Ricans are the most upwardly-mobile. A recent study showed that while the median income for the overall population grew some 7.3 percent in 1990, the median income for Puerto Rican families grew nearly 30 percent. (2:4A)

## FAMOUS HISPANIC CONTRIBUTORS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

- Hispanic Americans have made significant contributions to the development of our nation since the earliest times. While Admiral David Farragut, an Hispanic American, became famous as the victor in the battles of New Orleans and Mobile Bay during the Civil War, Farragut's father also served in the American cause. George Anthony Nagin Farragut was a Spaniard who came to America in 1775. As the master of a small trading ship, he offered his services to the Revolution. (13:132)

- More recently, Hispanics have made their mark in politics, public service, the entertainment industry, organized sports, business, and science, as well as the military service. In 1995 there were 17 Hispanic members of Congress. (17:279)

- In the entertainment world, Hispanic Americans came to the forefront in the late 1980s and early 1990s. **Edward James Olmos**, known for his role on the television show *Miami Vice*, launched a successful movie career and also starred in *Stand and Deliver*, a movie about Los Angeles educator **Jaime Escalante**, and *American Me*, which concerns crime and violence in the Hispanic community. **Gloria Estefan** is a top contender in the record industry and **Rubin Blade** recorded his first album in English for non-Hispanic audiences.

- In the world of science, **Antonia Novello**, a distinguished M.D., became the first Hispanic woman Surgeon General of the United States. NASA selected three Hispanic astronauts, including the first Hispanic woman astronaut, **Ellen Ochoa**.

- Like David Farragut, Hispanics continue to distinguish themselves in the military service of their country. Hispanics have been awarded 41 Medals of Honor to date--more of the nation's highest military honor than any other identifiable group. Some 20,000 Hispanics served in Operation DESERT SHIELD/STORM and many unsung Hispanic heroes emerged from the ground war with Iraq. In his autobiography, General H. Norman Schwarzkopf refers reverently to his former commander, Hispanic **General Richard E. Cavazos, USA** (Ret.), as one of the finest division commanders for whom he ever worked. During Operation RESTORE HOPE, the relief effort in Somalia, this nation mourned for the family of **Domingo Arroyo**, an Hispanic Marine and the first casualty in the region. He was killed in a firefight with Somali warlords.

- Hispanic Americans have made a substantial difference in the history of this country. They leave a proud heritage for the future Hispanic leaders of the 21st century to emulate. Additional noted Hispanic Americans and their contributions are listed below:

- POLITICS: **Henry Cisneros** (former Mayor of San Antonio, Texas and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development); **Edward Roybal** (U.S. Representative) and his daughter, **Lucille Roybal-Allard** (U.S. Representative, who was the first Hispanic woman to directly

follow her father in Congress, though from a different district); **Nydia Velazquez** (first Puerto Rican woman to serve in the House of Representatives); **Lincoln Diaz-Balart** (Florida Congressman and anti-Castro activist who is the first member of Congress to be related to Fidel Castro); **Robert Menendez** (New Jersey Congressman who is the first Cuban American to serve in the House and first Cuban representative from the state of New Jersey); **Ileana Ros-Lehtinen** (first Cuban American woman in the House of Representatives); **Luis Gutierrez** (Illinois' first Hispanic in Congress); **Henry Bonilla** (Republican Congressman from the state of Texas); **Frank Tejeda** (first member of the 103rd Congress elected when he emerged from the March 1992 filing period unopposed by Democrat or Republican); **Bill Richardson** (first Hispanic to occupy a leadership position in the House as Chief Deputy Majority Whip, later U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations); **Joseph M. Montoya** (U.S. Senator); **Dennis Chavez** (first American-born Hispanic elected to the U.S. Senate); **Herman Badillo** (first Puerto Rican elected to the U.S. House of Representatives); **Henry Gonzales** (Texas Congressman and Chairman of the House Banking Committee); **Ed Pastor** (first Hispanic Congressman from the state of Arizona); **Bob Martinez** (former Governor of Florida and head of the Drug Enforcement Agency under President Bush); **Raul Castro** (Governor of Arizona, resigned in 1977 to accept appointment as U.S. Ambassador to Argentina); **Ramona Acosta Banuelos**, **Katherine D. Ortega**, **Catalina Vasquez Villalpondo** (former U.S. Treasurers); **Lena Guerrero** (member of the Texas State Legislature and first woman or ethnic minority to be appointed to the Texas Railroad Commission); **Xavier Suarez** (first Cuban-American mayor of Miami in 1985); **Fernando Ferrer** (Bronx, NY borough president since 1987); **Nelson Merced** (first Hispanic elected to the Massachusetts State Legislature); **Jose Serrano** (Bronx Democratic Congressman and champion of inner-city educational reform); **Federico Pena** (first Hispanic mayor of Denver and Secretary of Energy); **Gloria Molina** (first Latina on the City Council of Los Angeles); **Lauro Cavazos** (first Hispanic to occupy a cabinet position, as Secretary of Education for the Reagan Administration); **Bert Corona** (Mexican American Political Associations); **Cesar Chavez** (United Farm Workers); **Jose Angel Gutierrez** (La Raza Unida Party); **Jerry Apodaca** (former Governor of New Mexico); and **Baltasar Corrada** (Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico).

-- SCIENCE: **Jaime Escalante** (Los Angeles educator credited for his role in improving the math and science skills of Los Angeles-area high school students--the improvement in Escalante's students' scores on the Calculus Advanced Placement Exam for college entrance was so dramatic that the group was accused of cheating by the Educational Testing Service in Princeton, N.J.--the movie *Stand and Deliver* tells his story); **Franklin R. Chang-Diaz**, **Ellen Ochoa**, and **Sid Gutierrez** (NASA space shuttle astronauts); **Luis W. Alvarez** (Nobel Prize winner in physics for work with subatomic particles); and **Severo Ochoa** (Nobel Prize winner in medicine and physiology for laboratory synthesis of DNA and RNA).

-- ENTERTAINMENT: **Edward James Olmos**, **Anthony Quinn**, **Gilbert Roland**, **Martin Sheen**, **Raquel Welch**, **Imogene Coca**, **Freddie Prinze**, **Jose Ferrer**, **Erik Estrada**, **Paul Rodriguez**, **Ricardo Montalban**, **Saundra Santiago**, **Esai Morales**, **Maria Conchita Alonso**, **Jimmy Smits**, **Raul Julia**, **Andy Garcia**, **Elizabeth Pena** (actors/actresses); **Rita Moreno** (first Hispanic actress to win an Oscar); **Brunilda Ruiz** (ballerina); **Trini Lopez**, **Joan Baez**, **Tony Orlando**, **Xavier Cugat**, **Desi Arnaz**, **Carlos Montoya**, **Vickie Carr**, **Chita Rivera**, **Jose Feliciano**, **Johnny Rodriguez**, **Rick Trevino**, **Graciela Rivera**, **Tito Puente**

(entertainers); **Truman Capote** and **Anais Nin** (authors); **Geraldo Rivera** (talk show host); **Luis Valdez** (writer/director of *La Bamba--the Richie Valens Story*); **Lourdes Lopez** (principal dancer, New York ballet); **John Benitez** (record producer best known for producing Madonna's first hit record); **Kenny Ortega** (choreographer); **Daisy Fuentes** and **Christy Turlington** (supermodels); **Ernesto Lecuona** (composer); and **John Secada** (musician).

-- SCHOLARS/WRITERS: **Nicolas Guillen** (poet inspired by African rhythms); **Carlos Montenegro** (novelist); **Piri Thomas**, **Lydia Cabrera**, **Claribel Alegria** (writers); **Eduardo Seda**, **Ernesto Galarza**, **Octavio Romano**, **Richard Duran**, **Julian Samora**, **George Sanchez** (scholars); **Luis Valdez**, **Guadalupe de Savedra**, **Abelardo Delgado** (poets); **Wilfredo Lam**, **Manuel Martinez**, **Dagoberto Reyes** (painters); and **Oscar Hijuelos** (Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love*).

-- SPORTS: **Angelo Cordero** (jockey); **Chi Chi Rodriguez**, **Nancy Lopez**, **Lee Trevino** (golf); **Jim Plunkett** (football); **Jose Torres**, **Hector (Macho) Camacho**, **Kid Chocolate** (boxing); **Juan Marichal**, **Luis Tiant**, **Pedro Ramos**, **Orlando Cepeda**, **Roberto Clemente**, **Luis Aparicio** (baseball); and **Alberto Salazar** (Boston Marathon winner).

-- BUSINESS: **Romana Acosta Banuelos** (turned a small tortilla factory into the multimillion-dollar corporation of Romana's Mexican Food Products); **Roberto C. Goizueta** (former president and chairman of the board of Coca Cola); **Prudencio Unanue** (founder of Goya, a corporation producing Hispanic food products); **Oscar de la Renta** and **Adolfo Sardina** (fashion designers); and **Elwood Quesada** (first head of the Federal Aviation Agency and former vice-president of Lockheed Aircraft Corporation).

-- MILITARY: Hispanics have served at all levels in the military. **Admiral Horacio Rivero** was the first Hispanic four-star admiral in the Navy; **General Richard E. Cavazos** was the first Hispanic four-star general in the Army; and **Lieutenant General Elwood R. Quesada** was the first Hispanic general officer in the Air Force. **Brigadier General Luis R. Esteves** was the first Puerto Rican graduate of West Point and founder of the Puerto Rican National Guard.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

- Mexicans showed Californians how to pan for gold and introduced the technique of using mercury to separate silver from worthless ores.

- Certain foods common in the U.S. are of Hispanic origin: tacos, tortillas, Caesar salad, and chili con carne, which was invented about 1880 by Mexican Americans living in Texas.

- Some Hispanic words which have become part of the American language: rodeo, cabana, macho, bonanza, mosquito, chocolate, tobacco, adobe, burro, corral, desperado, incommunicado, patio, plaza, poncho, vigilante, cafeteria, canoe, hurricane, cannibal, manatee, tomato, canyon, armada, bronco, and barbecue.

- Six state names are of Hispanic origin: Texas (from tejas, land of tile roofs), Nevada (land of snow), Colorado (red land), and California (an imaginary island in Spanish folklore, "an earthly paradise"), Montana (mountain), Florida (state of flowers). Throughout the United States there are many cities and towns with Hispanic-origin names. In California alone, there are more than 400.

- Other contributions include poinsettias, Chihuahuas, chewing gum, Canasta, and Rummy.

## **MILITARY PARTICIPATION**

### **THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**

Although Spain was a strong colonial power in North America in the 1700s, the Spanish defeat in the Seven Years War led to the parceling of lands to the English in the Spanish Colony of Florida. Spain, therefore, felt no loyalty to the British Monarchy during the course of the American Revolution. Despite negotiations with the Continental Congress, neither side could agree on the fate of Florida and therefore Spain played no overt role in aiding the American colonists. Nevertheless, several Hispanic forefathers, like the father of David Farragut, provided discrete or covert aid to the colonists. Another such man was Bernardo de Galvez, a Spanish Army officer and Governor of Louisiana in 1777.

From 1775-77, de Galvez provided rations and weapons to the Continental Army. In 1777, he arranged safe passage for James Willing, an American agent of the Continental Congress, who had led a successful campaign along the Mississippi harassing British shipping, plantation owners, and military outposts.

Taking advantage of weaknesses in the British defenses and Spanish recognition of American Independence in 1779, de Galvez captured all the British forts along the Mississippi from Lake Pontchartrain to Baton Rouge. He later defeated all British forces in Florida and restored control of this region to Spain. For his contribution, de Galvez has been memorialized on a U.S. stamp and a statue in Washington, DC and in his namesake city of Galveston, Texas. (18:7-9)

### **POST-REVOLUTIONARY WAR**

- One of de Galvez's officers, Francisco de Miranda, also played an important role in the defeat of the British on the Mississippi and the capture of the port of Pensacola. Ultimately a revolutionary himself, de Miranda left the Spanish army and led a campaign against Spanish colonialism while living in North America and Europe. In 1805, he led an American-sanctioned invasion of Venezuela and is credited with the title of "Precursor of Latin American Independence." (18:9)

- During the 1800s, the sale of all Spanish lands west of the Mississippi to France was made under the proviso that these lands not be in turn relinquished to the United States. France reneged on its agreement and President Jefferson negotiated the Louisiana Purchase for \$15 million in 1803. (18:11)

- Hispanic Americans joined General Andrew Jackson in defeating the British during the War of 1812. (18:11)

## TEXAS-MEXICAN FRONTIER

- The next conflict involving Hispanics in American history took place over territorial disputes between Mexico and the Republic of Texas. When Mexican general and self-proclaimed President Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna attacked the Alamo on March 6, 1835, 183 Texans were killed, six of them Mexicans. Of 11 survivors of the battle at the Alamo, 10 were Hispanic. (18:13)

- One Hispanic survivor of the Alamo was Lieutenant Colonel John Nepomuncene Seguin. Selected as a courier to leave the fort, sneak through Santa Anna's lines and obtain reinforcements, Seguin succeeded in escaping but could not obtain relief in time. After the war, he returned to San Antonio where he served two terms as the city's mayor. (18:13)

## CALIFORNIA-MEXICAN FRONTIER

- One of the most interesting Hispanic figures of this period in American history is Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo. Born of the upper class in 1808, Vallejo grew up during the turbulent years of the Mexican Revolution. An accomplished Mexican army officer by the age of 21, he gained the confidence of the Mexican governor and was named military commander of northern California. During the same period, he became a member of the territorial legislature and delegate to the Mexican Congress. Despite these ties to his native Mexico, Vallejo believed it would be in the best interests of the California territories to yield their sovereignty to the United States. He shifted loyalties and discretely helped Americans secure California. Later appointed as an agent for the U.S. government, he became one of eight Californians to write the State's first constitution and became one of the first members of the state senate in 1849. For his role in the westward expansion of America, Vallejo has been highly recognized. The city of Vallejo, California was named in his honor, a vineyard produces wines with his name, and, in 1965 the U.S. Navy commissioned the nuclear-powered fleet ballistic missile submarine USS M. G. Vallejo (SSBN 658), one of "the forty-one for freedom," in honor of this distinguished Hispanic. (12:232-233)

## THE CIVIL WAR

- When the Civil War broke out, the Mexican American community was divided in loyalty. Approximately 1,000 joined the Union Army and another 2,550 served in the Confederate Forces. (18:14)

- By the end of the war, as many as 9,900 Mexican Americans had fought. Most served in the regular army or volunteer units which were integrated. Some, however, served in predominately Mexican American units with their own officers. Of the 40,000 volumes written about the Civil War, only one, *Vaqueros in Blue and Gray*, has been written about their contribution. (18:14)

- In 1863, the U.S. government established four military companies of Mexican American Californians (the First Battalion of Native Cavalry) to utilize their "extraordinary horsemanship." At least 469 Mexican Americans served under Major Salvador Vallejo, helping to defeat a Confederate invasion of New Mexico. (18:14-15)

- Colonel Miguel E. Pino established the Second Regiment of New Mexico Volunteers. At least six Independent militia companies commanded by Mexican Americans were raised in New Mexico. Approximately 4,000 Mexican Americans volunteered in these companies. (18:15)

- In Texas, the Union established 12 Mexican American companies (the First Regiment of Texas Cavalry). By and large, the officers were non-Hispanic, although there were some Mexican Texans serving as captains and lieutenants. (18:15)

- David G. Farragut was the most famous Union Hispanic. When he was nine years old he was appointed as a midshipman in the U.S. Navy. At the age of 13 he served aboard the USS Essex during the War of 1812. In 1862, he successfully commanded Union forces and captured the city of New Orleans. In the Battle of Port Hudson (135 miles north of New Orleans) Farragut's tactics for attacking forts gained accolades. After orchestrating the capture of Mobile, Alabama, Farragut was commissioned Admiral of the Navy on July 26, 1866. He then took command of the European Squadron and, while in the Mediterranean, he visited the birthplace of his father in Ciudadela, Minorca, where he received a hero's welcome. (18:17-18)

- The first Hispanic to receive the Medal of Honor was a U.S. Navy sailor named John Ortega, who was awarded the nation's highest award for valor during the Civil War. (10:213)

- Other Hispanics served in such Confederate units as the Benavides Regiment, the 10th Texas Cavalry, the 55th Alabama Infantry, Manigault's Battalion of South Carolina Artillery, the 6th Missouri Infantry, the Chalmette Regiment of Louisiana Infantry, and the Second Texas Mounted Rifles. (18:18)

- Colonel Santos Benavides was the highest ranking Mexican American in the Confederate Army. He was one of the first to take up arms and one of the last to surrender. (18:18)

- Loretta Janet Velasquez, a Cuban-born woman, enlisted in the Confederate Army in 1860, masquerading as a man, without her soldier husband's knowledge. She fought at Bull Run, Ball's Bluff, and Fort Donelson, but was detected while in New Orleans and discharged. Undeterred, she re-enlisted and fought at Shiloh until unmasked once more. She then took duty as a spy, working in both male and female guise. Her husband died during the war and she married three

more times, widowed in each instance. She later traveled throughout the West settling in Austin, Nevada. (18:20)

## THE SPANISH AMERICAN WAR

- The catalyst for the Spanish American War was the sinking of the battleship USS Maine on February 15, 1898. Historians have debated the cause of the ship's demise for almost 100 years. Was it sabotage or was it an accident? Was the incident engineered by the American side to give the country an excuse for war? The loss of 260 American lives makes the latter theory unlikely. In 1974 Admiral Hyman G. Rickover called together a team of historians and technicians to re-examine the issue. Admiral Rickover's analysis concluded that the explosion which ripped through the Maine's lower decks was caused by some internal heat source, most likely a coal bunker fire, which led to an uncontrollable fire that ignited a magazine full of ammunition. A recent study commissioned by *National Geographic* magazine, utilizing computer technology, historical accounts, and other available data, led to one of two conclusions. The USS Maine could have been sunk by a fire in a coal bunker which in turn triggered a magazine explosion, or it could have been a mine detonated against the hull of the ship that caused the magazine explosion. Whatever the reason, the United States declared war on Spain on April 11, 1898, with the avowed purpose of freeing the oppressed Cubans. (1)

- During the Spanish American War there were several Hispanic members of Theodore Roosevelt's "Rough Riders." Captain Maximiliano Luna was the most distinguished Hispanic "Rough Rider." A military camp in New Mexico was named after him. After the Spanish American War, George Armijo, another Hispanic "Rough Rider," became a member of Congress. (18:22-23)

## WORLD WAR I

- At the beginning of World War I, Hispanics and others who lacked sufficient English skills were sent to training centers to improve their language proficiency and produce soldiers fully capable of being integrated into the Army. Eventually a training plan to do so was established at Camp Gordon, Georgia. However, by the time the camp was operational, the war was almost over. (18:24-25)

- Nicholas Lucero, an Hispanic, received the French Croix de Guerre during World War I for destroying two German machine gun nests and maintaining constant fire for three hours. (18:25)

- Marcelino Serna received the Distinguished Service Cross for the single-handed capture of 24 enemy soldiers. His other decorations included the French Croix de Guerre and two Purple Hearts. (18:25)

- It was not until 1989 that the first Hispanic recipient of the Medal of Honor in World War I was recognized in a ceremony during Hispanic Heritage Week. David Barkley was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously for bravery in action on the Meuse River, France, in November

1918. Barkely's Hispanic background did not come to light until 71 years after he gave his life for his country. (18:51)

- Other Hispanics did serve in World War I, but records are insufficient to determine the exact numbers. (18:25)

## WORLD WAR II

- Estimates range anywhere from 250,000 to 500,000 as the number of Hispanics who served in the Armed Forces during World War II (2.5 - 5 percent of the total force). Records are sketchy because, like the Census Bureau, the military did not closely track Hispanic members. Also, Puerto Ricans were not counted as Hispanic, but as Puerto Ricans. Over 53,000 Puerto Ricans served in the Armed Forces during World War II. Hispanics did not serve in segregated units like Black soldiers did, with one exception--the Puerto Rican 65th Infantry Regiment. However, Hispanic soldiers participated in all the major battles of World War II. (10:213; 18:27-33)

- National Guard units, with large proportions of Mexican Americans, served from Arizona, Texas, New Mexico, and California. (18:27)

- Approximately 200 Puerto Rican women served in the Women's Army Corps. (18:27)

- The New Mexico National Guard, with its large representation of Hispanics, became the largest single American unit in the Philippines. Their knowledge of Spanish was a definite asset as Spanish was a principal language in the Philippines. Because of this presence, many Hispanic Americans were taken prisoner during the fall of the Philippines and participated in the "Bataan Death March." (18:27-28)

- The first Hispanic Medal of Honor recipient of World War II was Private Jose P. Martinez. He was honored for his role in the 1943 American invasion of the Aleutian Islands. (18:28)

- One unit in particular, the 141st Infantry Regiment from Texas, had a high concentration of Hispanic soldiers. This distinguished unit saw 361 days of combat during World War II, earning three Medals of Honor, 31 Distinguished Service Crosses, 12 Legions of Merit, 492 Silver Stars, 11 Soldier's Medals, and 1,685 Bronze Stars. (18:29)

- Hispanics received 12 of the 431 Medals of Honor awarded during the Second World War. (18:52-57)

## KOREAN WAR



- During the Korean War, nine Hispanics received the Medal of Honor. (10:213)
- The Puerto Rican 65th Infantry Division was the only all-Hispanic Division to serve during the Korean War. It earned four Distinguished Service Crosses and 124 Silver Stars. (18:34)
- "Hero Street, USA," in Silvis, Illinois, a Chicago suburb, is so-named because it contributed more men to military service during World War II, Korea, and Vietnam than any other single place of comparable size; the street is only a block and a half in length. Eighty-four men from 22 families who lived on this street fought in these three wars. Fifty-seven served in World War II and Korea. Two families, both named Sandoval, contributed 13--six from one, seven from the other. Out of eight Hispanic heroes who didn't come back, three were Sandoval sons. (6)
- Captain Manuel J. Fernandez, USAF, an F-86 fighter pilot assigned to the 334th Fighter Squadron, 4th Fighter Interceptor Wing, was credited with 14.5 enemy kills in 125 missions. He was the third-ranked fighter pilot of the war and retired as a colonel. (18:35)

## THE VIETNAM WAR

- Over 80,000 Hispanics served in the Armed Forces in Vietnam. (10:213)
- Prior to the full-scale escalation of the Vietnam War, Special Forces Advisor, Sergeant First Class Isaac Camacho's fire base was overrun by Viet Cong in November 1963. After an intense firefight, Camacho was taken prisoner. He is most likely the first Hispanic POW of the Vietnam era. Remarkably, Camacho escaped his captors after 20 months and made his way to freedom. He was awarded the Silver and Bronze Stars in September 1965 and later promoted to Captain, U.S. Army. (18:37)
- Lieutenant (Junior Grade) Everett Alvarez, Jr. was the first American pilot taken as a prisoner of war and remained a prisoner longer than anyone else, eight and a half years. (18:38)
- On April 30, 1975, Master Sergeant Juan J. Valdez climbed aboard the last U.S. helicopter to depart the roof of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon. The U.S. presence in Vietnam, which spanned 18 years, ended. Valdez' presence gave credence to the Hispanic theme of participation in America's wars: "First in...last to leave." (18:40)
- A figure, often given, states that while Hispanics made up only five percent of the U.S. population during the Vietnam era, they comprised 19 percent of the casualties in the war. Tony Morales, of the American G.I. Forum, points out that 27 percent of the names on the Vietnam Memorial are Hispanic. (4:28)

## POST-VIETNAM ERA

- Hispanics won 13 Medals of Honor, six of them awarded to Marines. As of 1998, seven ships and three active submarines have been named for Hispanics, including the nuclear-powered fast

attack submarine, USS San Juan (SSN 751), named after the capital city of Puerto Rico. In 1979 Admiral Horacio Rivera became the Navy's first Hispanic four-star admiral and ultimately served as Vice Chief of Naval Operations. Between 1979-1980, Edward Hidalgo held the highly esteemed and powerful position of Secretary of the Navy. During Hidalgo's tenure, much time and effort was spent through various advertising media, trying to attract Hispanic youth to the Navy. (10:213)

#### DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM

- Approximately 20,000 Hispanic servicemen and women participated in Operations DESERT SHIELD/STORM. (7:45)
- Hispanics comprised 7.9 percent of the Fleet Marine Force, 6 percent of the Navy, 4.2 percent of the Army and 3.1 percent of the Air Force of those who served in the Persian Gulf theater during the war. (10:213)

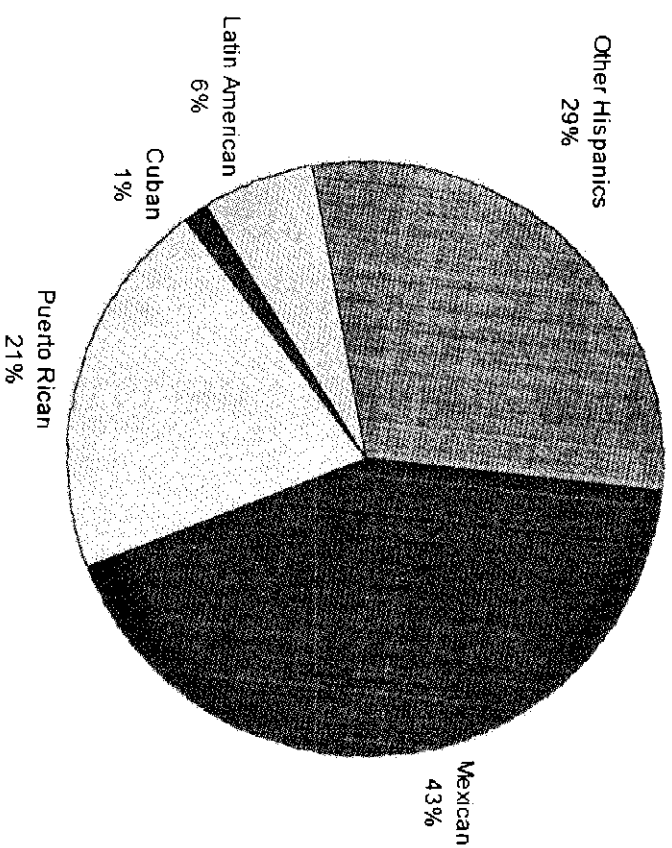
#### HISPANIC PARTICIPATION IN TODAY'S MILITARY

- Today, Hispanic participation in all branches of the military is substantial. As of March, 1998, 7% (100,191) of those serving on active duty were Hispanic. The highest representation was in the Marine Corps with 11.2 % (19,242) which was followed by the Navy at 8.1% (30,638), the Army at 6.7%% (32,050), the Coast Guard at 6.4% (2,181), and the Air Force at 4.4% (16,080). In 1998, seven Hispanics held the rank of general officer with more than half (4) serving in the Air Force. There were also 450 Hispanics serving in the highest noncommissioned officer rank (E-9). (3:12-17)

The military and civilian contributions of Hispanics reflect a deep commitment to the basic American principles of freedom and democracy. With the projected increase in their population, Hispanics have the opportunity to make an even greater impact on society in the future.

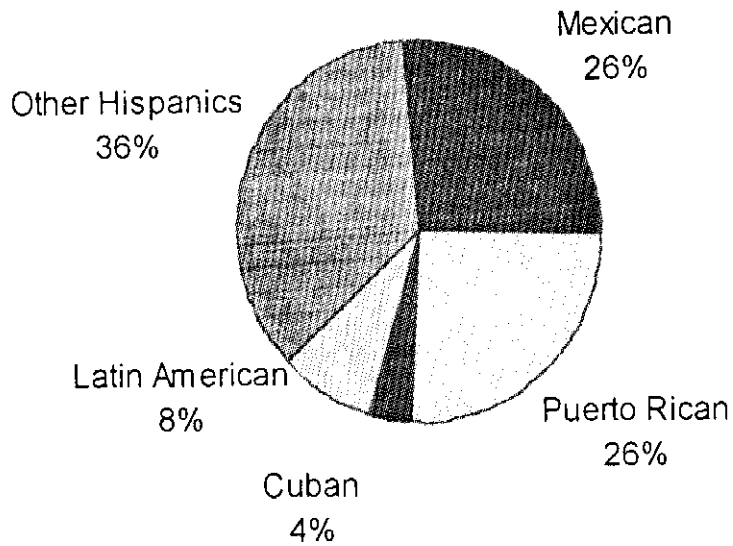
# HISPANIC AMERICANS IN DOD

## MARCH 1998

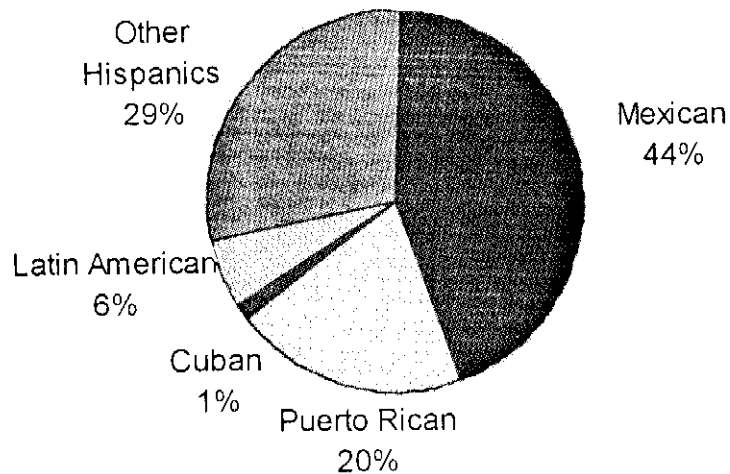


NOTE: Percentages based on total Hispanic Americans in DOD.  
SOURCE: Defense Manpower Data Center

## HISPANIC AMERICAN OFFICERS



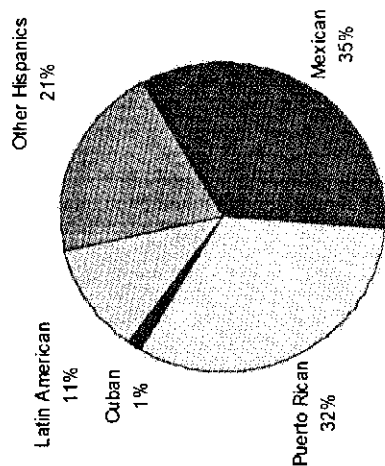
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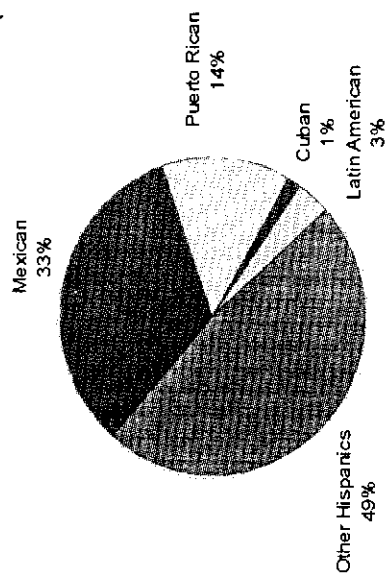
NOTE: Percentages based on total Hispanic American officers/enlisted in DOD.  
SOURCE: Defense Manpower Data Center - March 1998

# DISTRIBUTION OF HISPANIC AMERICANS IN DOD

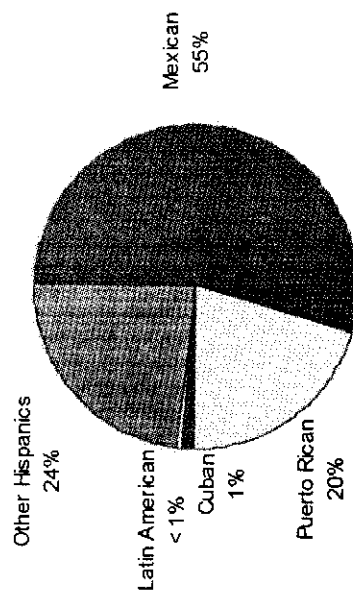
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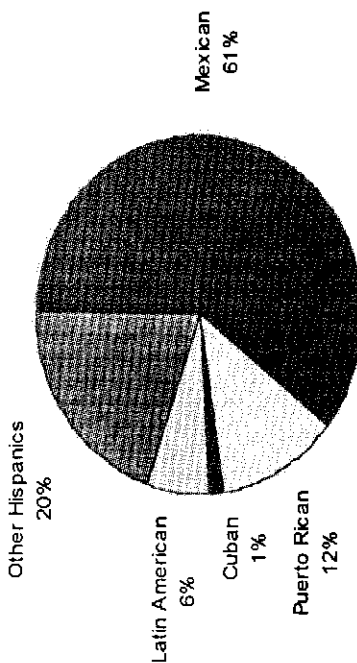
ARMY



NAVY



AIR FORCE



MARINE CORPS

NOTE: Percentages based on total Hispanic Americans in each service.  
 SOURCE: Defense Manpower Data Center - March 1998

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